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A Letter of

Marquis de La Fayette

1781.



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A LETTER OF MARQUIS  
DE LA FAYETTE, 1781

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3. *A Letter of Marquis de La Fayette, 1781.*

THE following letter has been kindly sent by Dr. Frederick Tuckerman of Amherst, Massachusetts. The original is in the possession of Mr. Marvin M. Taylor of Worcester, Massachusetts, whose wife was a lineal descendant of Dr. Samuel Cooper, to whom the letter was written. A short sketch of the life of Dr. Cooper will be found in Vol. VI. of the REVIEW, pp. 301-303.

CAMP NEW YORK Virginia 26th October, 1781.

*My Dear Friend*

The Glorious, and important success, we have obtained will afford joy to every true American, and I heartily congratulate you upon an event, that has such an immense influence in our Affairs—Nothing but the great distance I was from you has prevented my writing more fre-

<sup>1</sup> See the previous letter, where Richard declares that he has not yet heard from Monk.

<sup>2</sup> Committee appointed May 16th (*C. J.*, VII. 655). Pickering and St. John reported May 25, presenting Richard's abdication, which had been signed some time earlier (*Ibid.*, 654). The votes referred to were probably those of the 16th.

quently than I have done—but there was such a danger of letters being lost or intercepted, that it spoiled in great measure the pleasure of a friendly correspondence. The storm that had been gathered against this small Army gave us great deal of trouble to maintain the Vessel afloat. Nothing but the bravery, fortitude zeal and discipline of our regular force, the patriotism, and patience of our militia, could have saved us from ruin, and extricated us from our innumerable difficulties—at last, it became possible to recover the ground we had lost and from post, to post, the enemy took the very one which could the best suit our purposes.

The combination of Means, which from so different and so distant points were timely collected in this Bay have insured us a success so brilliant in itself so great in its consequences that it must add a new glory to Genl Washingtons name and become a new tie of confidence and affection between the two Nations.

Virginia had been the place pointed out by the British Ministry. Virginia was the object of this Campaign, and the thunders of Britain were in the hands of a Man whose great and well supported character, ranks him among the Heroes of England, and places him far above any General they have hitherto sent to America. What will be the feelings of that proud Nation when they hear that their best General, their best Officers, the remainder of 18 of their best Corps amounting to 7050 men exclusive of Seamen, and a great number of vessels have surrendered to an Army equal to that which made the boasted Siege of Charlestown where less than two thousand men, after forty five days of oppressed marches were with difficulty persuaded to accept of conditions which after eleven days have been imposed upon Lord Cornwallis's Army. It is true there has been less gallantry on the part of the British, and less sense on the part of their General displayed in the Siege of Charlestown than in any Siege that ever was made—But however our garrison of Charlestown was paid a very great Compliment to when after so short a space Lord Cornwallis accepted the same terms I am far from reflecting on that General whose talents I greatly admire and whose lessons I have been proud to take in the course of this campaign, but cannot help observing that Sir Henry Clinton's repeated blunders have thrown the Gallant Cornwallis in this disagreeable situation, and that no Man has ever helped me so well to deceive Lord Cornwallis dangerous positions—as the Commander in Chief of the British Army.

The operations of the Seige will be so fully related to you that it is needless for me to enter into details I shall only observe to my friend that never my feelings have been so delightfully gratified as they were on the 14th in the evening, when the American light infantry in sight of the Armies of France America and England gallantry stormed a redoubt Sword in hand, and proved themselves equal in this business to the Grenadiers of the best troops in Europe. I long ago knew what dependance was to be put on them, and was so sure of success, that not a gun had been loaded—but to see this little affair transacted under the eyes of Foreign Armies, gave me Unspeakable Satisfaction.

P.  
J. N. B. 2504

My present wish (*entre Nous*) is to go round with the fleet to the Southward—how far I will be able to effect this purpose is not yet determined, at all events I will be in Philadelphia in the course of the Winter—and should the Armies remain quiet should Congress think I may serve them in Europe, I shall be happy to cross, and recross the Atlantic in the space of a few months provided I see my going there may be materialy serviceable—that is, my dear Sir, the present plan I have in view, and whatever may be the wishes of Congress, nothing on my part will be neglected to render them my services. At all events I shall endeavor to pay a visit to my Friends in Boston—the attachment, and partiality I feel for that Capital can not be sufficiently expressed—I set such a value by the esteem of your Countrymen that it will ever animate me under every difficulty I may encounter, their reception on my return from France, and the many favors I have received from the people at large, and from individuals in particular, shall ever be precious to my heart.

Mr. Cooper is returning to Boston, and hopes to be exchanged. I am very desirous to see every particular respecting Halifax Newfoundland and Penobscot—I request you will take some pains on this head—and send the accounts to me at Philadelphia under cover of the Massachusetts Delegates. It is very well worth sending an express on purpose and I would wish to know what Expedition you think might (for next campaign) become most agreeable to your State—

Present my best compliments to the Govenor and his Lady, Mr. Baudouin Mr. Cushing and all our friends—remember me most affectionately to your family and believe me

Yours for ever

LAFAYETTE.











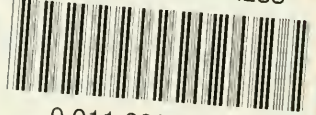








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